ARAMBE FLAME

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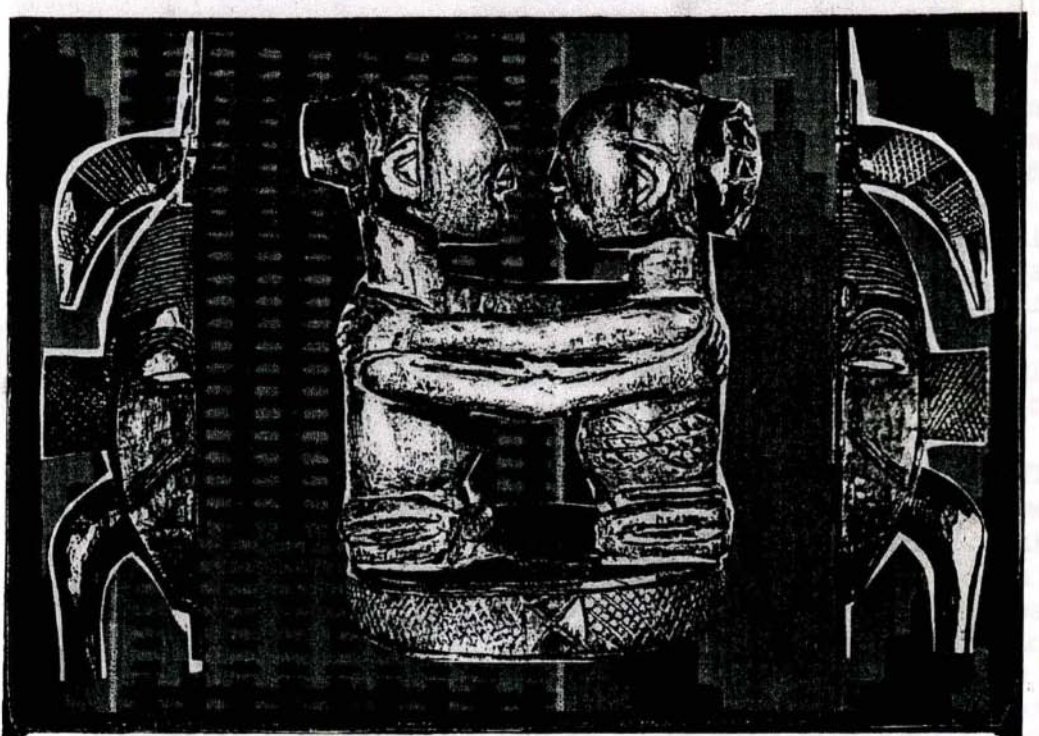

In This Edition:

Letters: Sister Shares Experiences, Etc. on Her Visit to Motherland; **From Other Sources:** "Zero-Tolerance Track from Schools to Prison, Study: Thousands in Prison May Not Be Guilty, "Taking It to Streets" Campaign, African Females Initiated into Womanhood, U.S. Cited for Hypocrisy; **Community News:** Annual Elections, Former Volunteer Pays a Visit; **Commentary: Cosby's Remarks and the Question of Knuckle-heads; Back In Time; Announcements**

EDITORIAL POLICY

The HARAMBEE FLAME is the monthly newsletter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization(Nebraska State Pen chapter). Ours is a pan-Africanist publication, meaning that we view all people of African descent as one African people, having certain basic interests in common. Also, the HARAMBEE FLAME attempts to be Africentric, in that, through study of the history, cultures, and traditional values of African people, we seek to have and cultivate an African way of looking at things.

The main purposes of the HARAMBEE FLAME are to stimulate and inform. We list "stimulate" first because, more than anything else, we want our readers to be moved to question their/your own ideas, lives, and the circumstances in which we live and to challenge those things that must be challenged in order for us to move from a condition of mental and spiritual servitude and physical dependence upon Caucasian institutions to a state of collective self-determination. Toward this purpose, we present commentaries, poems, etc. These do not necessarily represent the official positions of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization.

The HARAMBEE FLAME provides information because wise people want to know what's going on and because certain kinds of information can stimulate the mind, inspire people to want to act, and influence them to pursue proper understanding so that the actions they take will be as effective as possible. The main vehicle we use to provide information is our "From Other Sources" feature in which we make an effort to provide news about the problems we African people are confronted by and the steps we are taking to resolve them. In this feature, we try to provide coverage of the activities of African people and developments affecting us in the U.S., the nations of Africa, and elsewhere. In "Commentary," we offer analysis of and views about current events and developments.

We encourage you to send your comments, essays, poems, etc. to HARAMBEE FLAME; Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization; P.O. Box 2500; Lincoln, NE.; 68542-2500.

LETTERS

Sister Shares with Us Experiences, Observations, and Perspectives on Her First Visit to the Motherland

[Wendy Keys is a sister and mother, living, working, and studying in Birmingham, Alabama. Last year, she spent three months in Ghana and wrote to us about her time there. Recently, we asked her if she would be willing to answer questions about certain aspects of her experience so that we could share her observations, perspectives, etc. with readers of the HARAMBEE FLAME. We thank her for taking the time to respond to our questions. Due to space limitations, we are only using some of our questions and, in some cases, are using excerpts from the sister's responses]

HARAMBEE FLAME: Sister, you visited our Motherland for the first time last year. You spent some time in Ghana. What were the circumstances that led to your making this trip?

Wendy Keys: I'd been accepted to the School of Public Health at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in the field of international health, fall 2001. One of the requirements for this particular degree is to conduct a research project in the country of our choice. I chose Ghana and was there from June 2-September 1, 2003. My research project focused on aflotoxin consumption and liver cancer due to persistent hepatitis B virus or hepatitus C virus infection. Aflatoxins are toxic substances that grow uncotrollably on corn(maize), peanuts (ground nuts), grains, and other crops. They are especially high in countries with arid and semi-arid temperatures--including West Africa, India, and China. According to the World Health Organization(WHO), people indigenous to these areas are possibly consuming 3 times the amount of these aflotoxins that have been established as safe. We believe liver cancer rates are extremely high in West African

countries, including Ghana. Unfortunately, we're not too sure what those exact rates are. We wanted to determine the prevalence rates of liver cancer in the Ghanaian population and link those rates to excessive aflatoxin levels. Another UAB student conducted a project in Ghana.

HF: What were a couple of your first observations or impressions?

WK: One of my initial thoughts about Accra, the capital, was that it reminded me of most major cities I'd visited in the U.S. There are approximately 17 million people who live in Accra, with a multitude of nationalities/ethnicities represented. Accra is a bustling municipality, with traffic jams, homeless people, and crowded streets. During the course of my stay, I would travel to Accra from Kumasi on a relatively regular basis. The area where my hotel was is called "Osu" and it is an area of the city with plenty of shops, outdoor vendors, hotels, and restaurants. Kumasi was quite different. There are approximately 1.5 million people there and I believe the population is not as diverse. People sometimes refer to Kumasi as the "big village." It's simply not as metropolitan as Accra.

HF: In one of your letters, you spoke of being called a particular name by children in villages. Would you tell us about this?

WK: We'd make frequent stops in the villages and the children would run after the car, shouting and waving. My initial response was to wave back to the children. They seemed elated, but I wasn't sure what they were shouting. I asked one of the other passengers, a native Ghanaian, and she responded that the children were saying, "obroni," a term we would hear for the duration of our stay. "Obroni" is a generic term for white man/woman, person with an accent, or foreigner. It didn't matter that we were not of European descent. It's a term everyone used to identify foreigers in general. I don't think I had a problem being referred to as "obroni." But when I would attempt to educate people that I, in fact, was not white, they didn't

seem to be interested in my response. One would learn to just "leave it at that." [Editor's note: Wendy has cocoa-brown skin and could not be mistaken for a European.]

HF: Aside from this "obroni" business, were there things about Ghana that surprised you or caught you off-guard?

WK: I didn't go to Ghana with any expectations or preconceived ideas. I'd worked until two days before I got on the plane, so there wasn't time for me to get my thoughts together on the issue. All of my experiences in Ghana were first-hand.

HF: You are a vegetarian. Did you run into problems insofar as meals were concerned?

WK: I didn't have a problem with the food. I'd eat some of the same foods for the duration of the trip, to reduce my risk of acquiring a parasitic infection. I enjoyed the jollof rice(rice with stewed tomatoes or tomato paste, vegetables and seasonings. I'd buy fruit(watermelon and pineapple), spaghetti and spaghetti sauce, cheese, wheat bread, potatoes, and so forth. Most evenings I'd eat a plate of steamed cabbage, green beans with shitoe--a homemade spicy sauce with the consistency of ketchup. The fruit in Ghana is quite good. There is little refrigeration in Ghana. Although we had refrigeration at the guesthouse, it barely kept the food cold. Near the end of our trip, I'd buy my own vegetables from the market and have the food prepared for me. To return to the matter of whether there were things that surprised me or whatever, one thing I found intriguing was the fact that, when we'd leave the guesthouse, either Gifty or Elizabeth(the chefs), or any other of the workers, would always want to know "when are you coming back." The majority of the time, I would give these long-winded responses and would watch their eyes gloss over. It wasn't until I'd asked someone about the matter and was told that most Ghanaians aren't interested in the details that I understood the question was really a way of simply being courteous. Just as Ghanaians might say something equivalent to "hello" when you enter a place, they ask "when are

you coming back" when you leave a place.

HF: Wendy, you visited the slave dungeon at Elmina. What was that like?

WK: We traveled to Elmina(Portuguese for "the mine"), where the Cape Coast Castle is located. You know I could describe what it was like to actually walk into those slave cells and witness with my own eyes the structure/ place/habitation of our ancestors. I'd heard with my own ears from our tour guides about the habitual rape, torture, and brutality against African men and women. I could explain to your that that was, in fact, the most horrific thing I'd ever seen with my own eyes. I could describe how dark and dank it was in those cells due to the lack of windows to provide sunlight or an occasional breeze. I could't stand it for more than the few minutes we were in there. I could describe the limited space in those cells appropriated for more than one hundred African inmates, or the density of the filth that tainted the walls, leftover for my eyes to see. I could explain how the governor's chambers, located immediately above the slave quarters, was a spacious room with plenty of windows. I could do all these things and never impart how I truly felt, still feel, about the matter. I remember a tourist in our group mentioning that I looked "disturbed" or "angry," and I'm sure he was right. It's still hard to accept the atrocities that occurred and how Africans were sold as human capital in exchange for "drinkables" and other insignificant stuff Europeans supplied for their purchase.

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In an upcoming edition(s) of the FLAME, we will be running some of the photos Sister Keys took there in Ghana.

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As African men, we commit ourselves to respecting ourselves and each other; to respecting African women; and to respecting our children and youth, and giving them proper guidance.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

"Zero-Tolerance" Track from Schools to Prisons

..."Of those 2.1 million prisoners, 40 percent(approximately 791,600) are African men, most of whom are...between the ages of 18 and 29. Between 1980 and 2000, three times as many African American men were inducted into the PIC(Prison Industrial Complex) than were enrolled into colleges and universities. Over 30 million people now have felony convictions...Approximately 3 million people...will be released from prison over the next five years...

"Now, out of a voting population of 10.4 Africans, 1.46 million of our men have lost the right to vote due to felony convictions. Thirteen percent of African men wear the brand of felon disenfranchisement...By the tens of thousands, African women are being incarcerated with felony convictions...

"Since the 1990s, many school districts have replaced a system of graduated sanctions with a 'zero tolerance' approach to discipline. The result was that the number of students suspended annually since 1974 nearly doubled,

from 1.7 million to 3.1 million. In 2000, Africans represented 17 percent of the overall student population, but 34 percent of those suspended. Nationally, African students 2.6 times more likely to be suspended than white students...

"'Zero Tolerance' caused the increase of police presence, the use of metal detectors, and 'search and seizure' procedures in our schools...African students are punished more severely for lesser offenses, such as 'disrespect', 'excessive noise', or 'loitering' than white students. Many are singled out as 'defiant to authority' because they refuse to accept the racist policies and treatment of the schools...

"What does 'zero tolerance' mean in East Oakland? It equates to a 60 percent and rising dropout rate. That is why African and Latino youth represent one-third of this country's adolescent population but two-thirds of all youths confined to detention and correctional place-

ments. Four out of five youth detained between 1983 and 1997 were 'youth of color'. African American youths with no prior criminal records are six times, and Latinos three times, more likely to be incarcerated than whites for the same offenses.

"The adult prison and juvenile incarceration systems are the destination points for the children who have traveled through the Schools-to-Prison Pipeline. Seventy-five percent of youth under the age of 18 sentenced to adult prisons have not completed the 10th grade. In the juvenile justice system, 70 percent suffer from learning disabilities and 33 percent are reading below the fourth grade level..."

-from "War on Our Community: the Education Battlefront," pages 1 and 2, May 19 SAN FRANCISCO BAY VIEW(San Francisco, CA.)

Study Suggests Thousands Who Are in Prison May Not Be Guilty

"A comprehensive study[prepared at the University of Michigan and supervised by a law professor there, Samuel R. Gross] of 328 criminal cases over the last 15 years in which the convicted person was exonerated suggests that there are thousands of innocent people in prison today. Almost all the exonerations were in murder and rape cases, and that implies, according to the study, that many innocent people have been convicted of less serious crimes...

"The study identified 199 murder exonerations, 73 of them in capital cases. It also found 120 rape exonerations. Only nine cases involved other crimes. In more than half of the cases, the defendants had been in prison for more than ten years. The study's authors said they picked 1989 as a starting point because that was the year of the first DNA exoneration. Of the 328 exonerations they found in intervening years, 145 involved DNA evidence. In 88 percent of the rape cases, DNA evidence helped free the inmate...

"The study...also found that very different factors contributed to wrongful convictions in rape and murder cases.

"Some 90 percent of false convictions in the rape cases involved misidentification by witnesses, very often across

races. In particular, the study said black men made up a disproportionate number of exonerated rape defendants...

"Interracial rapes are, moreover, uncommon. Rapes of white women by black men, for instance, represent less than 10 percent of all rapes, according to the Justice Department. But in half of the rape exonerations where racial data was available, black men were falsely convicted of raping white women.

"'The most obvious explanation for this racial disparity is probably also the most powerful', the study says. 'White Americans are much more likely to mistake one black person for another than to do the same for members of their own race'.

"On the other hand, the study found that the leading causes of wrongful convicions for murder were false confessions and perjury by co-defendants, informants, police officers or forensic scientists.

"A separate study considering 125 cases involving false confessions was published in the North Carolina Law Review last month and found that such confessions were most common among groups vulnerable to suggestion and intimidation. 'There are three groups of people most likely to confess', said Steve A Drizin, a law professor at Northwestern, who conducted the study with Richard A. Leo, a professor of criminology at the University of California, Irvine. 'They are the mentally retarded, the mentally ill and juveniles'. Professor Drizin, too, said that false confessions were most common in murder cases. 'Those are the cases where there is the greatest pressure to obtain confessions', he said..."

-from "Study Suspects Thousands of False Convictions," page 4, June PRISON ART(San Francisco, CA.)

"Taking It to the Streets" Campaign Using Hip Hop as Tool for Military Recruitment

"Last year, the U.S. Army, partnering with an African-American owned advertising firm called the Viral Marketing group, launched its 'Taking it to the Streets' campaign to recruit African-American and Latino youth.

"It featured a bright yellow Hummer spray-painted with images of the military and the Stars and Stripes. Hip-hop music blared, and people wore basketball throwback jerseys...

"Since its 2003 debut, 'Taking it to the Streets' has showed up at MTV's 'Spring Break', BET's 'Spring Bling' and various NAACP functions.

"This spring, 'Taking it to the Streets' is planning to storm gatherings like Miami's Calle Ocho festival, Black College Reunion in Daytona, Fla., the Black Heritage Fest in New Orleans and the Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York.

"Last fall, a related event, the 'Campus Combat Tour', appeared at five college campuses with high percentages of African-American students. It culminated with a battle between rappers who were judged by the tour's co-sponsor, the popular hip-hop magazine 'The Source'.

"The military's drive aimed at African American and Latino youth is evidence of a long-standing tradition of recruiting soldiers of color to the front lines...

"Today, among U.S. soldiers in Iraq, about 32 percent of those who have died at enemy hands, or from accidents, suicide or illness, have been identified as being from a member of a minority group, according to a Scripps Howard article. Of those wounded in action, 30 percent have been people of color...

"In 2002, in a push to recruit more Latinos into the military, the Bush administration accelerated the naturalization process for noncitizens(predominantly Latino) if they chose to serve in active duty...

"On average, the Army spends about $13,000 in recruitment advertising to get one young person enrolled--about what it costs New York's public school system per year to educate one child, according to a recent Village Voice article..."

-from "Military Luring Black and Latino Youth with Hip-Hop," page 15, May 6 THE OMAHA STAR(Omaha, NE.)

African Females in Jackson, MS. Initiated into Womanhood

"Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center...continues to earn its reputation as a place for cultural exchange and development. On Saturday, May 8, 12 female teenagers, who completed required work in the 2004 Rites of Passage program sponsored by The Young People's Project, made their transition into womanhood...

"'We held workshops each week with the initiates as a way of honoring and affirming their connection to female mentors and elders, and as a way of recognizing the elder's importance as a source of wisdom and stability in the community', stated Kai Abiodun, project coordinator.

"African dance was also a part of the curriculum...Members of the Mississippi Afrocentrik Drum and Dance Ensemble were among those who worked with the 2004 class to prepare them for the rites of passage ceremony.

"'The ritual of the final ceremony is very sacred because it celebrates the initiates' accomplishments in the presence of the entire community', said Abiodun...

"During the rites of passage, the leader asked, 'Who is it that comes to this crossroads?' The initiates affirmed, 'We do'.

"'Why do you come?' asked the leader. 'To claim our identity!' The community participants the answered, 'Yebo, yebo, yebo' to the question, 'What do you say to this request?'

"Culturally based, but spiritual in nature, the initiates pledge to pray to God for understanding; wisdom to make proper decisions in their lives; to grant them spiritual

strength; to be guided in growing from childhood to womanhood; for better understanding of their duties as women, as citizens of the community, in their world and the universe; and for the blessings of the community.

"During the passage ritual, the initiates tasted eight spices of life--wine for their African culture, salt for being in touch with the earth, lime for the not so good times, honey for balance and for joyful times, cayenne for times of struggle, water for nourishment and rejuvenation, palm oil for healing and reflection, and cocout for blessig their life path...

"...the initiates offered their individual talents in poetry, dance and song to those gathered to witness their 'cultural birthday'..."

-from "YPP[Young People's Project] Initiates 12 into Womanhood," pages 1 and 17, May 13-19 JACKSON ADVOCATE (Jackson, MS.)

U.S. Cited for Hypocrisy and Arrogance in its Positions on Global Treaties

"The United States, which preaches the virtues of good governance and rule of law to the outside world, is notoriously remiss in either signing, ratifying or adhering to major international treaties, according to U.S. academics, constitutional lawyers and human rights activists...

"Such treaties and conventions lay down international norms governing political, social and economic life, from human rights and disarmament to torture and the environment. Most recently, the U.S. military has violated treaties on how to treat prisoners or civilians during military conflicts or detention...

"In a memo to President George Bush last January, White House Counsel Alberto Gonzales dismissed the Geneva Conventions as antiquated...

"Key 'unratified' treaties include the Convention on the

Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty(CTBT), the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Convention on the Rights of the Child...

"Washington...took 40 years to ratify the Genocide Convention, which it signed in 1948.

"In an unprecedented reversal of its own policy, the United States also declared in May 2002 that it no longer considered itself bound by the Rome Statute that created the International Criminal Court(ICC), on the grounds that the body might try U.S. citizens on 'frivolous charges'. The United States withdrew from the treaty despite having signed it in December 2000.

"Washington has also refused to sign several other global treaties, dismissing them out of hand. These key unsigned treaties include the Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Landmines, the International Convention Against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries, the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons, and the International Convention on the Suppression and Puishment of the Crime of Apartheid.

"Washington has signed and then quickly ratified only two recent treaties, both relating to terrorism: the International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings and the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism..."

-from "U.S. Criticized for Ignoring Global Treaties," pages 9 and 31, June 1 THE FINAL CALL(Chicago, IL.)

COMMUNITY NEWS

Harambee Afrikan Cultural Org. Annual Elections

Our constitution and by-laws call for elections to be held on the first meeting in May of each year. At our May 1st. meeting, our current Alaga(Chairman) was re-elected. Les Wagner was elected to the position of Eso Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-at-Arms/Chairman of Cultural Affairs Committee). The previous Eso Alakoso Asha, Jahi(Mike Carr), left the joint in April. The other members of our Central Committee are appointed by the two elected Brothers and then approved or rejected by the general membership. At our May 29th. meeting, Mosi Bankole was accepted by the membership to continue as Akowe, as was Kitwana Musasi as Akewi; and the appointment of Johnny Houston was approved. In accordance with our constitution and by-laws, the incoming Central Committee took office at our first meeting in June.

Former Volunteer Pays Us a Visit

While she was living in Omaha, Eugenie Chasme, was among our most reliable volunteers. This sister, who was born and grew up in Benin in West Africa, founded the Labelle Afrique(Beautiful Africa) Foundation in Omaha. The Foundation sponsored programs of traditional African music and dance, exhibitions of traditional African garments, and otherwise functioned to fulfill its mission of exposing the public to the beauty and richness of African cultures. On three occasions, the Labelle Afrique Foundation blessed us here at the prison with performances by music/dance groups from the continent.

A few years ago, Maritada Afrika(the name we, as an organization, gave to Sister Chasme in honor of the dedication she had shown to and for us) left Omaha for Baltimore, Maryland in order to find and work toward a financial situation that would be less bleak. On May 15th., Maritada Afrika returned to us, with her husband, Gilbert Gamba. They were in Nebraska for their daughter's graduation from college. Marita and the rest of the family are doing well. We are waiting for materials from her on an economic-development program she is putting together and will be introducing to the African community there in Baltimore.

COMMENTARY

By now, just about all of us have read or heard about Bill Cosby's speech last month in D.C. commemorating the Brown v. Board of Education ruling. In his talk, reportedly, he cracked on low-income and lower-middle-income Africans in this country for not being able to speak "proper" English, having foolish spending habits, going to jails and prisons, etc. The remarks generated discussion and debate in communities, in print media, in radio and t.v. and on the internet. According to an Associated Press article, Cosby issued a statement about the controversy:

> "I feel that I can no longer remain silent. If I have to make a choice between keeping quiet so that conservative media does not speak negatively or ringing the bell to galvanize those who want change in the lower economic community, then I choose to be a bell ringer."

Okay. We have two problems: no complete text of Cosby's speech and not much space left in which to comment. So we'll hit a couple of things briefly. First, it's ironic that Brother Bill was critical of "the ways these people talk," referring to low-income Africans he characterized as "knuckleheads." How is this ironic? Let's go back to the Cosby statement about bell-ringing. He says, "If I have to make a choice between keeping quiet so that conservative media **does** not speak negatively..." Bill Cosby is a college graduate. He should know that, according to the rules of English grammar, a **singular** noun would use the verb form, "does." "Media" is **not** a singular noun but is the **plural** form of "medium." So if he knew how to speak English "properly," he'd have said, "...conservative media **do**..."

The point is not that Bill Cosby is a knucklehead but that, when we criticize or ridicule others, we should know that our own houses are in order. In addition, though we speak English, it isn't one of **our** languages; and while we need to be able to use it in a way that's conducive to our material and other success, we owe it no special reverence. This language is not only **not** sacred but is a nutty-ass language, full of inconsistences and contradictions.

What usages of this language are "proper" or "standard" is more a matter of arbitrary determinations on the part of Europeans who are in this country's cultural driver's seat.

What kind of "proper" English has words that contain soundless letters--such as "**p**sychiatry" and "**p**neumonia"? What kind of "proper" English has words such as "laughter" and "daughter," for example, which are spelled exactly the same way, except for the first letter of each, and, yet, are pronounced so differently? What up with that? What kind of "proper" English makes it possible for us to say that **broken** things should be **fixed,** while, at the same time, has some people expressing the notion that folks on **fixed** incomes are more likely than others to be **broke.** How is it that people are said to be riding **in** cars but riding **on** planes? Wouldn't it be foolhardy for a person to attempt to ride **on** a plane? And, of course, there are the prefixes and suffixes. The prefix, "un-," changes a word to its opposite. "Unfinished," for example, means "not finished," the opposite of "finished." But then we have such words as "unruly" and "uncanny." So where is "ruly"? And when was the last time anybody heard of some "canny"?

While it is important, as a practical matter, for us to be able to speak, write, and comprehend so-called "standard" or "proper" English, if we decide to communicate with each other with improvized English forms, that's our business, and these forms are **no less legitimate** than any other. There are, indeed, knuckle-heads among us. To be counted among this category of African folks are those who feel reverence toward English **because** it is a language of Europeans and those who take pride in speaking Spanish, French, and/or other foreign European languages but haven't learned even a single **African** language and have little or no desire to do so.

Is it not a form of knuckle-headedness for people to crave and bow down to those things which are of the worlds of others but disdain those things which are of their own world?

-Editor

BACK IN TIME

Two cases which reached the Supreme Court, both entitled 'Bailey vs. Alabama' and both involving the same plaintiff, were to break new ground. The cases challenged the so-called "contract system" of labor and involved an illiterate Alabama Negro, Lonzo Bailey, who had "contracted" to work on a farm for twelve months at a pay rate of $12 per month. He accepted an advance of $15, then worked for nearly a month before quitting. When he left his job, Bailey refused to return the advance to his employer. Under Alabama law, a worker who entered a contract with the intent of defrauding his employer was criminally liable. Bailey claimed he had no such intention, but he had no way to prove his innocence. When his employer brought him to court, he was not allowed to testify in his own defense(a custom which affected most southern Negroes). The court found Bailey guilty and sentenced him to 136 days at hard labor.

When the case reached the Supreme Court in 1908 Justice Holmes...delivered the majority opinion, implicitly upholding the legality of the contract system by stating that the matter really did not come under the high court's jurisdiction...

Three years later the suit reached the Supreme Court again, through the efforts of Booker T. Washington and others who financed the costly litigation. Some new justices were on the bench, and this time the court declared the Alabama law, which had denied Bailey the right to attest to his own innocence, to be unconstitutional. In delivering the majority opinion, Justice Charles Evans Hughes finally reached the core of the issue. Slavery had been outlawed, and yet the very "essence of peonage is compulsory service in payment of a debt." While the very consistent Mr. Justice Holmes dissented, the majority of the court finally declared in 1911 that since the states were forbidden to impose a system of slavery directly, it was also illegal to contrive to do it indirectly.

Source: INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY OF AFRO-AMERICAN LIFE AND HISTORY: The Quest for Equality--From Civil War to Civil Rights -by Charles H. Wesley

ANNOUNCEMENTS

To receive a prison survival package, including THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOLDIER, A Guide to Healthy Living in Solitary, write to: American Friends Service Committee, Attn: Bonnie Kerness, 972 Broad St., 6th. floor, Newark, N.J. 07102.

The Prison Poster Project is a collective of artists and activists working in collaboration with prisoners across the U.S., creating a portable mural that will be used to uplift the dialog around incarceration through the universal language of pictusres. Contact the Prisoner Poster Project, PO Box 71357, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. The goal is for the mural to be completed by spring of 2005.

In the state prison(Lincoln, NE.) chapter of the Harambee Afrikan Cultural Organization, we have as our primary objective "transformation from 'black' malehood to **African manhood.**" We invite you, the members of the African community on the outside, as well as Africans here on the inside, to join us in our efforts to achieve this objective. Our Saturday meetings are from 1 to 3 p.m. and our Tuesday meetings are from 6 to 8 p.m. During the month of July, our meetings will be held on the 10th., 13th., 24th., and 27th. Call (402) 479-3379 for more information.

The John Beasley Theater and Workshop presents August Wilson's "Jitney" at the John Beasley Theater June 4 through July 3. The theater is located inside the LaFern Williams Center at 3010 Q St. in Omaha. Under the direction of Claude Purdy, "Jitney" will feature hometown favorites as well as veteran actors from around the country. Set in a Pittsburgh cab company in the late 70s, "Jitney" tells the story of the men who drive the jitney cars and their struggle to find honor and accomplishment. For ticket information, call (402) 444-3446.

Nebraskans for Justice will sponsor a fund-raising event during Juneteenth by hosting a performance by the nationally acclaimed "Watts Prophets." The performance will be held on Saturday, June 19 at the Creighton University Skutt Student Center, 2500 California St. in Omaha. Contact 341-9872 for additional information.

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION CREED

Together we seek to know that which is us, to expand our collective consciousness of who we are and whence we come. We exalt in the fact that Africans are beautiful in our own right, rather than at the expense of any other group of people. And in the true spirit of the Swahili word, "harambee," we promote the idea that cultural awareness is germane to human growth.

NGUZO SABA

Umoja - Unity
Kujichagulia - Self-determination
Ujima - Collective Work and Responsibility
Ujamaa - Cooperative Economics
Nia - Purpose
Kuumba - Creativity
Imani - Faith

HARAMBEE AFRIKAN CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

CENTRAL COMMITTEE

Alaga(Chairman - Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa

Eso/Alakoso Asha(Sgt.-at-Arms/Chairman of Cultural Affairs Committee) - Les Wagner

Olotu Eko(Education Chairman) - unfilled

Eleto(Administrative Chairman) - unfilled

Akapo(Treasurer) - Johnny Houston

Akowe(Secretary) - Mosi Bankole

Akewi(Librarian) - Kitwana Musasi Mtundu

HARAMBEE FLAME EDITOR

Wopashitwe Mondo Eyen we Langa